CLAIMS

1. A space usage benchmarking method, comprising:

obtaining space usage information relating to usage of space by each of plural participating institutions as data obtained directly from scheduling databases of the participating institutions;

automatically forming from the space usage information a space usage benchmark; and

providing the space usage benchmark to a selected participating institution over a computer network with a comparison of the space usage of the selected participating institution with the space usage benchmark.

2. The method of claim 1 in which each participating institution is an educational institution.

3. The method of claim 2 in which each participating institution is a post-secondary educational institution.

4. The method of claim 1 in which the space usage information is obtained by a space usage benchmarking aggregator that is separate from all of the participating institutions.

5. The method of claim 4 in which space usage benchmarking aggregator is an application service provider.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing communication from the selected participating institution to a queried participating institution that is anonymously or pseudonymously included in the space usage benchmark without identifying the queried participating institution to the selected participating institution.

7 The method of claim 1 further comprising automatically adapting a model of the space usage of the selected participating institution with respect to the space usage benchmark.

8. The method of claim 7 in which the adapting includes iteratively varying selected factors of the model of the space usage of the selected participating institution toward a preselected space usage result.

9. The method of claim 1 in which providing the space usage benchmark to the selected participating institution includes the selected participating institution selecting one or more fields of information to be included in the space usage benchmark.

10. The method of claim 9 in which the selected participating institution selects a class of one or more institutions to be included in the space usage benchmark.

11. The method of claim 9 in which the selected participating institution selects that the space usage benchmark include only space usage information from the selected participating institution.

12. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing the selected participating institution a communication automatically whenever a selected performance of the selected participating institution exceeds a level of benchmark performance.

13. In a computer-readable medium, space usage benchmarking software, comprising:

software for obtaining space usage information relating to usage of space by each of plural participating institutions as data output obtained directly from scheduling databases of the participating institutions;

software for automatically forming from the space usage information a space usage benchmark; and

software for providing the space usage benchmark to a selected participating institution with a comparison of the space usage of the selected participating institution with the space usage benchmark.

14. The medium of claim 13 in which each participating institutional is an educational institution.

15. The medium of claim 13 in which the space usage information is obtained by a space usage benchmarking aggregator that is separate from all of the participating institutions.

16. The medium of claim 13 further comprising software for providing communication from the selected participating institution to a queried participating institution that is anonymously or pseudonymously included in the space usage benchmark without identifying the queried participating institution to the selected participating institution.

17. The medium of claim 13 further comprising software for automatically adapting a model of the space usage of the selected participating institution with respect to the space usage benchmark.

18. A space usage benchmarking method, comprising:

providing space usage information relating to usage of space by a participating institution as data output provided directly from a scheduling database of the participating institution; and

obtaining a space usage benchmark formed from space usage information provided by plural participating institutions, the space usage benchmark being obtained by a selected participating institution with a comparison of the space usage of the selected participating institution with the space usage benchmark.

20. The method of claim 19 in which each participating institutional is an educational institution.

21. The method of claim 19 in which the space usage information is obtained by a space usage benchmarking aggregator that is separate from all of the participating institutions.

22. The method of claim 21 in which space usage benchmarking aggregator is an application service provider and in which the data output files are transmitted by each of the participating institutions to the application service provider over a computer network.

23. The method of claim 19 further comprising providing communication from the selected participating institution to a queried participating institution that is anonymously or pseudonymously included in the space usage benchmark without identifying the queried participating institution to the selected participating institution.

24. The method of claim 19 further comprising automatically adapting a model of the space usage of the selected participating institution with respect to the space usage benchmark.

25. The method of claim 24 in which the adapting includes iteratively varying selected factors of the model of the space usage of the selected participating institution toward a preselected space usage result.